

The Commission met on **Thursday, August 5, 2010**, with Chair Boyd and Commissioners O'Brien, Pugh, Reha and Wergin present.

The following matters were taken up by the Commission:

## **ENERGY AGENDA**

### **G-999/CI-09-409**

#### **In the Matter of a Commission Investigation into Gas Utility Service Quality Standards**

Commissioner Wergin moved to do the following:

1. Require Great Plains Natural Gas Company and Greater Minnesota Gas to submit proposals for natural gas service quality reporting by August 31, 2010.
2. Authorize CenterPoint Energy (CenterPoint) to report call center response times using the eighty-percent-of-calls-answered-within-twenty-seconds performance standard. Require CenterPoint to report call center response times in terms of percentage-of-calls-answered-within-twenty-seconds. Require CenterPoint to report this information for part of 2010 (as soon as practical), and all of 2011 and beyond.
3. Authorize Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (MERC) to report call center response times in terms of percentage-of-calls-answered-within-twenty-seconds. Authorize MERC to begin reporting this information for all of 2010 and beyond.
4. Authorize Interstate Power and Light Company (IPL) and Xcel Energy, Inc., (Xcel) to continue reporting combined electric and gas call center response times on a percent-of-calls-answered-within-twenty-seconds basis.
5. Authorize CenterPoint to change the way it reports customer complaints in its service quality reports to include the information about customer complaints that electric utilities file under Minn. Rules, part 7826.2000. Authorize CenterPoint to make this change using data for all of 2010 and beyond.
6. Require MERC to change the way it reports customer complaints in its service quality reports to include the information about customer complaints that electric utilities file under Minn. Rules, part 7826.2000. Require this change to be effective January 1, 2011.
7. Authorize IPL and Xcel to continue reporting combined electric and gas customer complaint data under Minn. Rules, part 7826.2000.
8. Authorize CenterPoint to start reporting the same meter reading performance data that electric utilities file under Minn. Rules, part 7826.1400. Authorize CenterPoint to make this change using data for part of 2010 (as soon as practical) and all of 2011 and beyond.
9. Require MERC to begin reporting the meter reading performance data that electric utilities file under Minn. Rules, part 7826.1400, effective January 1, 2011 (or earlier if practical), and for all of 2011, and beyond.

10. Require MERC to submit its meter reading performance data report, both with and without farm-tap customer data.
11. Require MERC to provide a status report on the implementation of telemetering for its Small Volume, Large Volume and Super Large Volume customers and the status of automated meter reading (AMR), if applicable, for its other customers. Require this status report to be filed in MERC's next rate case or in its annual (or final fourth quarter) service quality report for 2010, whichever is filed first.
12. Authorize IPL and Xcel to continue reporting combined electric and gas meter reading performance data under Minn. Rules, part 7826.1400.
13. Authorize CenterPoint, MERC, IPL and Xcel to report involuntary service disconnections by referencing the data from the reports they submit under Minn. Stat. §§ 216B.091 (monthly) and 216B.096, subd. 11 (annually at the beginning of the cold weather reporting time period and weekly during the cold weather time period).
14. Authorize CenterPoint, MERC, IPL, and Xcel to report service extension request response time data that electric utilities file under Minn. Rules, part 7826.1600, items A and B. Clarify that requests for service to locations previously served by a utility and reported as a disconnection/reconnection under Minn. Stat. §§ 216B.091 and 216B.096, subd. 11 should not be included in service extension request response time data. Authorize the utilities to make this change using data for part of 2010 (as soon as practical) and all of 2011 and beyond.
15. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to report the same customer deposit data that electric utilities file under Minn. Rules, part 7826.1900. Authorize the utilities to make this change using data for part of 2010 (i.e. as soon as practical) and all of 2011 and beyond.
16. Authorize IPL and Xcel to continue reporting combined electric and gas customer deposit data in the same way they have been under Minn. Rules, part 7826.1900.
17. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to continue reporting mislocate data in their service quality reports.
18. Require IPL to start reporting mislocate data in its annual natural gas service quality reports, effective January 1, 2010, beginning with IPL's May 1, 2011 annual report. IPL's mislocate rate will include both gas and electric locate requests.
19. Require Xcel to resume reporting mislocate data in its annual natural gas service quality reports, effective October 1, 2010, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2011 annual report. Xcel's mislocate rate will include both gas and electric locate requests.
20. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to continue reporting gas system damage in their service quality reports. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to change the way they report gas system damage data (as soon as practical in 2010 and for all of 2011 and beyond), so that gas system damage is reported under the following two categories:

- a. Damage under the control of LDC's employees and the LDC's own contractors. This category corresponds to the "Operator Excavation Damage (including their contractors)/Not Third Party" label on the Gas Distribution System - Incident Report.
  - b. Damage – all other causes. This would include damage caused during excavation work performed by third-parties, damage due to corrosion, natural forces other outside forces such as fires, vehicles, vandalism, construction and equipment failures, and other causes.
21. Require IPL to start, and Xcel to resume, reporting gas system damage data and information in their annual natural gas service quality reports, in the same way as CenterPoint and MERC, using the same criteria for categorizing the cause of gas system damage. Require IPL to start reporting effective January 1, 2010. Require Xcel to resume reporting effective October 1, 2010, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2011 annual report.
22. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to continue reporting gas service interruption data in their service quality reports. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to modify the way they report gas service interruptions (as soon as practical in 2010 and for all of 2011 and beyond) to include the following modifications:
- a. Continue reporting all service interruption but separated into the following two categories:
    - Outages due to LDC's employees and the LDC's own contractors. This category corresponds to the "Operator Excavation Damage (including their contractors)/Not Third Party" label on the Gas Distribution System - Incident Report.
    - Outages due to any other unplanned causes. This corresponds to the damage – all other causes category. This would include outages caused during excavation work performed by third-parties, outages caused by or due to corrosion, natural forces, other outside forces such as fires, vehicles, vandalism, construction and equipment failures, and other causes.
  - b. Continue providing summaries of major incidents but in the future provide summaries only for major incidents that are immediately reportable to the Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety (MOPS) according to the criteria used by MOPS to identify major incidents. These summaries should continue to include the following information: (1) location, (2) when the incident occurred, (3) how many customers were affected, (4) how the company was made aware of the incident, (5) what was the root cause of the incident, (6) what actions were taken to fix the problem, (7) what actions were taken to contact customers, (8) were there any public relations (or media) issues, (9) did the customers or company relight, and (10) what was the longest time a customer was without gas during the incident.

- c. Continue providing summaries of all service interruptions, regardless of the number of affected customers, which were caused by system integrity pressure issues. These summaries should include the same ten items of information that are provided in the PUC major incidents reports.
  - d. Begin providing the Commission (and OES) with contemporaneous notification of major reportable incidents as they are defined by MOPS. Commission notification should include the following: (1) the location and cause of the interruption, (2) the number of customers affected, (3) the expected duration of the interruption, and (4) the utility's best estimate of when service will be restored. This information should be provided within a reasonably prompt time to the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office by e-mail at [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us).
23. Require IPL to start reporting gas service interruption data and information in the same way as CenterPoint and MERC. This includes using the same criteria for categorizing gas service interruptions in annual natural gas service quality reports. The annual reporting requirement begins with IPL's May 1, 2011 annual report, effective January 1, 2010. The requirement for contemporaneous notification of major reportable incidents becomes effective with the Commission's order.
24. Require Xcel to resume reporting gas service interruption data in gas service quality reports to include the following:
- a. Require Xcel to report, effective January 1, 2011, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2012 annual reports, gas service interruptions separated into the same two categories that will be used by CenterPoint, MERC, and IPL:
    - Outages due to LDC's employees and the LDC's own contractors. This category corresponds to the "Operator Excavation Damage (including their contractors)/Not Third Party" label on the Gas Distribution System - Incident Report.
    - Outages due to any other unplanned causes. This corresponds to the damage – all other causes category. This would include outages caused during excavation work performed by third-parties, outages caused by or due to corrosion, natural forces, other outside forces such as fires, vehicles, vandalism, construction and equipment failures, and other causes.
  - b. Require Xcel to provide summaries of major incidents for major incidents that are immediately reportable to the Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety (MOPS) according to the criteria used by MOPS for identify major incidents, effective October 1, 2010, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2011 annual report. These summaries should include the following information: (1) location, (2) when the incident occurred, (3) how many customers were affected, (4) how the company was made aware of the incident, (5) what was the root cause of the incident, (6) what actions were taken to fix the problem, (7) what actions were taken to contact customers, (8) were there any public relations (or media) issues, (9) did

the customers or company re-light, and (10) what was the longest time a customer was without gas during the incident.

- c. Require Xcel to provide summaries of all service interruptions (regardless of the number of affected customers) that were caused by system integrity pressure issues, effective October 1, 2010, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2011 annual report. These summaries should include the same ten items of information that are provided in the PUC major incidents reports.
  - d. Request that Xcel begin providing the Commission (and OES) with contemporaneous notification of major reportable incidents as they are defined by MOPS, effective October 1, 2010, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2011 annual report. Commission notification should include the following: (1) the location and cause of the interruption, (2) the number of customers affected, (3) the expected duration of the interruption, and (4) the utility's best estimate of when service will be restored. This information should be provided within a reasonably prompt time to the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office by e-mail at [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us).
25. Do not require CenterPoint, MERC, IPL and Xcel to report response time data for calls regarding gas service interruptions following the criteria for electric service interruptions as stated in Minn. Rules, part 7826.1200, subpart 2.
26. Require CenterPoint, MERC, IPL and Xcel to start reporting telephone response times for their gas emergency phone line(s). Authorize:
- a. CenterPoint to start reporting this information effective January 1, 2010.
  - b. MERC to start reporting for part of 2010 (i.e. April 1, 2010, as soon as practical) and for all of 2011 and beyond.
  - c. IPL to start reporting this information, effective January 1, 2010, in IPL's May 1, 2011 annual report.
  - d. Xcel to start reporting this information, effective October 1, 2010, beginning with Xcel's May 1, 2011 annual report.
27. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to continue reporting gas emergency response times in their service quality reports. Require CenterPoint and MERC to include the average gas emergency response time in addition to reporting the percentage-of-calls-answered-within-an-hour-and-in-more-than-an-hour. Request these calculations to be made starting in 2010 (as soon as practical) and for all of 2011 and beyond.
28. Require IPL to start reporting gas emergency response times. Request IPL to provide the number and percentage-of-calls-responded-to-within-an-hour and in-more-than-an-hour as well as the overall average response time in minutes in the same way they are reported by CenterPoint and MERC. Request that IPL start reporting this information effective January 1, 2010, in IPL's May 1, 2011 annual report.

29. Request that Xcel begin providing a supplemental calculation in its annual natural gas service quality report that shows the number and percentage-of-gas-emergency-calls-responded-to-within-an-hour and in-more-than-an-hour.
30. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to continue reporting customer service related operations and maintenance expenses in their service quality reports. Require IPL (effective January 1, 2010) and Xcel (effective October 1, 2010) to start reporting, customer service related operations and maintenance expenses in their May 1 natural gas service quality reports. Require these customer service related operations and maintenance expense reports to only include Minnesota-regulated customer-service related expenses based on the costs recorded in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) accounts 901 and 903 plus payroll taxes and benefits.
  - a. FERC account 901 is entitled “supervision” and includes “the cost of labor and expenses incurred in the general direction and supervision of customer accounting and collecting activities.”
  - b. FERC account 903 is entitled “customer records and collection expenses” and includes “the cost of labor, materials used and expenses incurred in work on customer applications, contracts, orders, credit investigations, billing and accounting, collections and complaints.”
31. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to start filing service quality reports on an annual rather than quarterly basis, effective January 1, 2010. The first annual reports should be filed on May 1, 2011. Authorize CenterPoint and MERC to not file third and fourth quarter 2010 service quality reports.
32. Authorize IPL and Xcel to submit their natural gas service quality reports on an annual basis, beginning on May 1, 2011.
33. Authorize the May 1 annual reports to be treated as miscellaneous tariff filings for procedural purposes.
34. Authorize the opening of a new docket for each company each year for these reports. (CenterPoint should continue to use Docket No. G-008/M-10-378 for its 2010 reports, and MERC should continue to use Docket No. G-007, 011/M-10-374 for its 2010 reports.)

The motion passed 5 – 0.

**E-002/M-09-1048**

**In the Matter of the Petition of Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota Corporation, for Approval of a Modification to its TCR Tariff, 2010 Project Eligibility, TCR Rate Factors, Continuation of Deferred Accounting and 2009 True-up Report**

Commissioner O’Brien moved to decline the motion for reconsideration, and thereby reaffirm the Commission’s April 27, 2010 Order.

The motion passed 5 – 0.

**ET-2,E-002 et al./CN-06-1115**

**In the Matter of the Application of Great River Energy, Northern States Power Company (d/b/a Xcel Energy) and Others for Certificates of Need for the CapX 345-kV Transmission Projects**

Commissioner Pugh moved to decline to order a rehearing or a delay to the in-service date at this time, and rather to –

1. Require a status report on the cost allocation and ownership issues by January 15, 2011, and
2. Require the Applicants to evaluate the impact of a delay in the in-service date (between 2014 – 2017) of the Brookings project on the efforts of Minnesota utilities to meet the Renewable Energy Standard’s Milestones and to discuss the issue as part of the 2011 Biennial Transmission Projects Report.

Chair Boyd proposed amending the motion to require the Applicants to evaluate the impact of a delay in the in-service date (between ~~2014~~ 2015 – 2017) of the Brookings project.

Commissioner Pugh accepted the amendment.

Commissioner Wergin proposed amending the motion to decline the motion to compel filed by NoCapX 2020 and United Citizens Action Network.

Commissioner Pugh accepted the amendment.

Commissioner Reha proposed amending the motion to decline to order a rehearing or a delay to the in-service date at this time, without prejudice.

Commissioner Pugh accepted the amendment.

Chair Boyd proposed amending the motion to say, “Decline to order a rehearing. Decline to delay the in-service date at this time without prejudice,” etc.

Commissioner Pugh accepted the amendment, resulting in a motion to do the following:

1. Decline the motion to compel filed by NoCapX 2020 and United Citizens Action Network.
2. Decline to order a rehearing.
3. Decline to delay the in-service date at this time, without prejudice.
4. Require a status report on the cost allocation and ownership issues by January 15, 2011.

5. Require the Applicants to evaluate the impact of a delay in the in-service date (between 2015 – 2017) of the Brookings project on the efforts of Minnesota utilities to meet the Renewable Energy Standard's Milestones and to discuss the issue as part of the 2011 Biennial Transmission Projects Report.

The amended motion passed 5 – 0.

**E-6675/MC-10-618**

**In the Matter of the Application by ITC Midwest, LLC for a Minor Alteration to the Lakefield Junction Substation in Jackson County, Minnesota**

Commissioner Wergin moved to authorize the minor alteration request for the Lakefield Junction substation expansion with the following conditions:

1. At least ten days before the expanded substation is to be placed into service, ITC Midwest, LLC (ITC) shall notify the Commission of the date on which the substation will be placed into service and the date on which construction was complete.
2. At least ten days before the expanded substation is to be placed into service, ITC shall verify that construction of the substation is consistent with the site plan and drawings submitted with ITC's request for minor alteration authorization. If ITC anticipates significant changes to this plan, it shall notify the Commission at least ten days before implementing the changes.
3. Within 60 days after completion of construction, ITC shall submit to the Commission geo-spatial information (Geographic Information System-compatible maps, Global Positioning System coordinates) for all above ground structures associated with the project.

The motion passed 5 – 0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: SEPTEMBER 22, 2010**



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**Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary**